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SUBJECT: OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL - STATEMENT ON GEORGIA FOR SEPTEMBER 11 PC

Post is authorized to make the following statement at the September 11, 2008 meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council in Vienna:

Begin Text:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We sincerely appreciate French President Sarkozy's efforts to secure Russia's compliance with the six-point cease-fire agreement. We also commend the Chairman-in-Office for his ongoing and admirable efforts to resolve this conflict and to move forward "without delay" in deploying the additional military monitors, as called for in Permanent Council Decision No. 861.

Mr. Chairman, the United States looks forward to Russia fulfilling its commitment to withdraw its peacekeepers from the five observation posts along the line between Poti and Senaki within the agreed timeframe ) within seven days of the September 8 agreement between President Sarkozy and President Medvedev.

We also await Russia's withdrawal of its forces to their pre-conflict positions, as required by the Six Point Ceasefire Agreement. We are concerned by President Medvedev's September 9th statement that Russia would base 7,600 troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We remind Russia that the Ceasefire Agreement obligates the withdrawal of all Russian troops to the positions they held before August 7.

Once more, the United States calls on Russia to implement in its entirety the commitments made in the ceasefire agreement and its clarifying documents. In light of the recently-reported shooting of a Georgian police officer, we remind Russia that its forces are responsible for taking steps to maintaining order in the areas of Georgia that they occupy. We expect them to cooperate with the Georgian investigation of the incident and to ensure the safety and security of all persons in their vicinity. The ceasefire agreement must apply equally to Russia as it does to Georgia.

We strongly demand that Russia not block the free flow of humanitarian assistance to all areas of Georgia. The Russian checkpoint at Karaleti continues to turn back shipments of humanitarian assistance and assessment teams that are trying to reach the villages south of Tskhinvali. This violates point 3 of the Ceasefire Document signed by President Medvedev.

We welcome the European Union's commitment to put 200 EU observers on the ground by October 1. The United States believes these observers, together with the 100 additional OSCE military monitoring officers called for in the Permanent Council decision of August 19, will constitute the international mechanism of the six-point cease-fire agreement.

We urge the OSCE to quickly reach agreement on modalities for the additional MMOs, so that the remaining 80 monitoring

officers can be deployed as soon as possible.

Mr. Chairman, the United States will continue to stand with the people of Georgia and their democratically elected government, to support Georgia's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

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